

Astrology and Mental Health

The Celestial Cycles That Marked the Collective Crisis of the Twenty-First Century

A symbolic reading of collective trauma, historical memory, and the paths of healing that open up in the sky and in the psyche

Introduction: the sky as a mirror of the collective psyche

Astrology, when applied to the understanding of mental health, does not aim to replace Psychology, Psychiatry or Medicine — it aims to offer a symbolic map that helps to contextualise what is lived individually and collectively. The great planetary transits, especially those of the slow planets (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto), mark cycles that go beyond the life of a single person and speak of entire generations, family systems and nations.

In this article I propose an in-depth reading of these cycles between 2020 and 2026 — a period spanning the COVID-19 pandemic, the wars that followed, and the structural changes now underway — seeking to build bridges between astrological events, collective and individual psychic patterns, and the wounds that remain to be integrated. Throughout the text, I include examples of public figures who, precisely from 2020 onwards, made their own fragilities visible — because, just as in the therapy room, the great transits rarely remain purely abstract: they take on faces, stories, concrete decisions.

2020: the triple conjunction in Capricorn and the birth of a new order

On 12 January 2020, Saturn and Pluto came together in an exact conjunction at 22°46' of Capricorn. During the same year, Jupiter successively approached Pluto, forming three exact conjunctions — on 5 April, 30 June and 12 November — always within the same band of degrees of Capricorn. In February and March, Mars also crossed the sign, activating this configuration by direct contact at the very moment the World Health Organization declared, on 11 March 2020, a state of pandemic.

Each planet brought its own layer of meaning to this moment:

- **Saturn**, lord of time, law, limits and structures of authority, marked the inevitable closing of a cycle — nothing resting on façades or postponements would survive intact.

- **Pluto**, lord of the unconscious, of symbolic death, of hidden power and radical transformation, tore open what had been concealed: social inequalities, the fragility of health systems, the archaic fear of mortality.
- **Jupiter**, planet of expansion, amplified everything it touched — both the spread of the virus itself and the speed of the scientific and informational response, in a megaphone effect that served both truth and disinformation.
- **Mars**, planet of action and impulse, between February and late March was the trigger that precipitated decisions made under extreme pressure, with little time for reflection.

Symbolically, Capricorn rules structures, institutions, governments, systems of power and authority. The concentration of these four archetypes in the sign of structure announced, even before the virus was known, a period of collapse and reconstruction of systems — economic, health-related, political and psychological — on a global scale.

Mirrors in the sky: when collapse became public

One of the most revealing aspects of Mundane Astrology is observing how great collective cycles manifest, almost surgically, in the lives of people whose natal chart is attuned to those same degrees and signs. Let us look at some examples of public figures who, precisely from 2020 onwards, made their vulnerability public — on dates and in circumstances that resonate remarkably with the sky of the moment.

Capricorn: Raquel Tavares and the collapse of her own structure

The Portuguese fado singer Raquel Tavares, born on 11 January 1985 — Sun in Capricorn — publicly announced, on 10 January 2020, her withdrawal from the stage, revealing that she was “profoundly unhappy” and going through a depression. She did so two days before the exact Saturn–Pluto conjunction, precisely in the sign of her own Sun. It would be hard to find a more literal illustration of the archetype: a Capricorn native announcing the collapse of the structure that sustained her career, at the exact moment the sky concentrated, upon her solar sign, the planets of the end of a cycle (Saturn) and of radical transformation (Pluto).

The collapse of an institution: Harry and Meghan's departure from the Royal Family

On 8 January 2020 — days before the exact conjunction — Prince Harry and Meghan Markle announced their withdrawal from senior roles within the British Royal Family, explicitly citing reasons of mental health and wellbeing. The monarchy is, par excellence, a Capricorn institution: hierarchy, tradition, duty, lineage. Seeing one of its figures publicly break with that structure, invoking mental health precisely as the reason, at the height of the Saturn–Pluto conjunction, well illustrates the general theme of the cycle: structures that no longer protect those who inhabit them tend to fracture, and the psyche reclaims the right to its own integrity above institutional duty. Years later, in 2021 and 2023, Harry would publicly deepen this journey, through a documentary series and a memoir centred on his mental health and the process of healing childhood wounds — a development that, as we shall see further on, also resonates with the transit of Chiron in Aries.

Cancer: Selena Gomez and the wound made visible

The singer and actress Selena Gomez, born on 22 July 1992 — Sun in Cancer — revealed in 2020 her diagnosis of bipolar disorder, a story she would document in depth two years later. Cancer is the sign opposite Capricorn: it speaks of emotional vulnerability, family, memory and care. That a Cancer native made such an intimate psychic wound public precisely in 2020 is consistent with the fact that the North Node was located precisely in Cancer that same year — as we shall see further on, a collective invitation to legitimise the emotional world and break the silence around mental health.

Pisces: Simone Biles and the permission to stop

The American gymnast Simone Biles, born on 14 March 1997 — Sun and Ascendant in Pisces — withdrew from several events at the Tokyo Olympic Games in July 2021, explicitly citing her mental health and a temporary loss of spatial awareness mid-air. Pisces is the sign ruled by Neptune — dissolution, sensory overload, the need for withdrawal and protection of one's own nervous system. Biles's gesture, extraordinary for the courage of publicly interrupting what the entire world expected of her, is an almost perfect expression of Piscean wisdom: recognising the boundary between acceptable sacrifice and self-destruction.

Libra: Naomi Osaka and the price of broken balance

The tennis player Naomi Osaka, born on 16 October 1997 — Sun in Libra — withdrew from the Roland Garros tournament in May 2021, refusing to take part in press conferences she described as damaging to her mental health, later revealing episodes of anxiety and depression. Libra rules balance, public image, the need for harmony and the difficult art of saying no in the face of others' expectations. Her gesture, almost simultaneous with Biles's, became one of the most cited milestones in the new public conversation about mental health in elite sport.

These examples are not intended to reduce complex lives to a single astrological trait, but they illustrate how great collective cycles find an echo in those who, through the position of their natal chart, are particularly attuned to those degrees — and how the public exposure of these figures helped legitimise, for millions of anonymous people, conversations that had previously remained silent.

The echo of 1918: Pluto in Cancer and a century's hidden memory

About a hundred years earlier, between 1913 and 1938, Pluto crossed the sign of Cancer — the sign of home, family, nation, emotional memory and roots. It was precisely during that long passage that the First World War (1914–1918) and the Spanish flu pandemic (1918–1920) occurred, responsible for tens of millions of deaths worldwide. It was also in that period, in the years immediately following, that Carl Jung consolidated his symbolic and archetypal vision of the psyche, publishing “Psychological Types” in 1921 — a fact that is not without significance when one considers that Pluto in Cancer stirs precisely the deepest and least conscious layers of emotional and family life.

Cancer is the sign opposite Capricorn. Where Capricorn speaks of the State, authority and external structure, Cancer speaks of home, bonds, the people, protection and the memory of what sustains us from within. Pluto in Cancer, in that generation, stirred the collective unconscious around family, belonging and emotional security — forcing humanity to rebuild, upon ruins, its very notion of home and nation.

It is significant that, a century later, the symbolic axis has been reversed: in 2020, it is in Capricorn (structure, State, power) that the tension concentrates, while the North Node transits through Cancer. Humanity seems to be called, cyclically, to resolve the same polarity: the balance between external authority and inner security, between institutional control and emotional care.

The Lunar Nodes in 2020: the ignored invitation to return home

Between November 2018 and May 2020, the axis of the Lunar Nodes was positioned precisely in Cancer/Capricorn: North Node in Cancer, South Node in Capricorn. In astrological language, this means the collective evolutionary path pointed towards care, home, affective bonds and emotional security — and called for leaving behind excessive ambition, rigidity and identification with status and work. That is not what happened!

The widespread lockdown of 2020 can be read, in this key, as the literal — and forced — fulfilment of that nodal lesson: the world was compelled to “return home”, to slow down, to look inward. The contrast with the triple conjunction in Capricorn, occupied by the power structures that managed the crisis in a markedly authoritarian and unequal way across different regions, well illustrates the tension between what the systems demanded (control, obedience, productivity even in crisis) and what the collective soul was asking for (rest, connection, care). It is no coincidence that, precisely that year, so many public figures with Sun in Cancer — such as Selena Gomez — felt the call to make their own emotional vulnerabilities public. What I am writing may sound ironic, but our collective memory is very short indeed!

The weight of compressed time: urgency, uncertainty and the wound of trust

The health response to the pandemic — including the accelerated development of vaccines within an unprecedented timeframe — unfolded under a time pressure that, in astrological language, corresponds well to the combination of Saturn (structure, deadlines, authority) compressed by Mars (urgency, immediate action) and Pluto (absolute necessity, survival). Regardless of the scientific assessment of the safety and efficacy of each solution — which is a matter for Medicine and not Astrology — what left a psychological mark on many people was the experience of being confronted with irreversible health decisions, made in a climate of urgency, uncertainty and, at times, social coercion.

This experience left many people with concrete emotional aftereffects: hypervigilance, distrust of institutions, anticipatory anxiety, a sense of lost agency over one's own body, and unprocessed grief for human losses and for a “world before” that never returned. These are wounds that Holistic Psychotherapy seeks to hold without judgement, helping the person distinguish between the real fear experienced at the time and the narrative that still sustains it today — since, after all, everything ends up being somatised, as Psychosomatic Medicine describes so well.

To illustrate this clinical pattern, I share the case of Marta, 47: she came to consultation three years after the pandemic with a picture of generalised anxiety centred on distrust of health institutions. Her astrological chart showed natal Saturn in tense aspect with Pluto, activated precisely by the 2020 conjunction — a configuration that, in the therapeutic work, proved to be linked to a family history of medical decisions imposed on previous generations without full consent. The pandemic did not create the wound; **it reactivated it**.

The case of Rui, 34: a primary school teacher, came to consultation with a picture of profound emotional exhaustion and a sense of institutional betrayal. Lockdown had, for the first time in his adult life, forced him to stay at home with his family — something his natal North Node in Cancer had been asking of him for years, but which his professional routine had always postponed. Paradoxically, it was the crisis that restored his contact with his young children. The therapeutic work helped him integrate this ambivalence: gratitude for the family reunion, and legitimate anger at the way that reunion was imposed by a global crisis, rather than freely chosen.

Wars and the collapse of authority: when the example comes from above

From 2022 onwards, Russia's invasion of Ukraine inaugurated a new cycle of geopolitical instability, followed by the Israel–Gaza conflict from October 2023 and the escalating tension between Iran and the United States, alongside countless internal power struggles in various countries. Astrologically, this period coincides with the final phase of Pluto's long passage through Capricorn (2008–2023/24) — the process of erosion and collapse of power structures that no longer respond to the real needs of populations — and with Pluto's definitive entry into Aquarius, the sign of networks, technology, collective movements and rupture with traditional hierarchies.

More recently, this picture intensifies with the Saturn–Neptune conjunction, exact on 20 February 2026, at 0°45' of Aries — which I address in detail further ahead.

If the Moon symbolises the people, the instinct for protection and the basic need for emotional security, what we observe in this cycle is precisely the dissonance between the Moon (the real needs of populations) and Capricorn/Aries (structures of power and individual assertion by those who decide on behalf of all). When authority moves away from wisdom and dialogue, the confusion between victim and aggressor — so common in dysfunctional family systems and replicated here on a collective scale — tends to repeat, generating new layers of transgenerational trauma that the following generations will inherit, similar to what Systemic Constellations identifies in unresolved family patterns: when the pain of one generation is not acknowledged or processed, it unconsciously seeks a place in the next generation to finally be seen.

Chiron in Aries: the wound of identity and one's own will

Since 2018/2019 (with its definitive entry on 18 February 2019) and until April 2027, Chiron travels through the sign of Aries — its primordial archetypal wound, as this is the sign of “I Am”, of assertion and autonomous action. It is interesting to note that, in 2026, Chiron makes a brief incursion into Taurus (19 June to 17 September), then returns to Aries in September, in retrograde motion, until its final departure in April 2027 — as though the cycle itself were asking for one last retrospective look at everything that remained unhealed during this long passage.

Collectively, this transit invites us to confront the wound of not being able to freely assert ourselves, of having been silenced, invaded or stripped of authority — whether through personal history or through the collective circumstances of recent years (lockdowns, restrictions, wars, discourses of power that delegitimise the individual voice). It is no accident that it was precisely under this sky that figures such as Prince Harry publicly deepened, in a book and a documentary, the process of identifying and putting into words childhood wounds silenced for decades by institutional duty.

Individually, it is also an invitation to rediscover the legitimacy of existing and acting from oneself, without apologising for it — work that, in consultation, is often expressed as the rescue of the inner child who had to fall silent, obey or disappear in order to survive emotionally within their family system.

Saturn and Neptune in Aries: the end of one era and the beginning of another

The Saturn–Neptune conjunction, exact on 20 February 2026 at 0°45' of Aries, occurs only once every 36 years. The previous encounter took place in 1989, in Capricorn, coinciding with the fall of the Berlin Wall, in addition to what has already been described, and the geopolitical reordering of the post–Cold War world — a moment when, just as now, structures that seemed eternal revealed themselves to be sustained only by inertia and narrative, and collapsed once reality no longer supported them.

In Aries — the sign of beginnings, action, individual identity and leadership — the same conjunction takes on a very different tone from that of 1989. It speaks of a crisis of leadership legitimacy, of the temptation to impose order by force (Saturn) over dissolved or betrayed ideals (Neptune), and of the risk of confusion between vision and illusion, between firmness and authoritarianism. Neptune in Aries had only previously been present in the zodiacal sphere between 1861 and 1875 — a period that coincided with the American Civil War — which reinforces the unusual, and potentially turbulent, nature of this configuration in the cardinal fire sign.

The new nodal cycle: from the Cancer–Capricorn axis to the Aquarius–Leo axis

After crossing the Taurus–Scorpio, Aries–Libra and Pisces–Virgo axes, the mean North Node finally entered Aquarius (South Node in Leo) in late July/August 2026, beginning a new cycle that will last until March 2028. This axis had already been activated in the same way between 2007 and 2008.

If the Cancer–Capricorn cycle of 2018–2020 called for a return home and to emotional care, the new Aquarius–Leo cycle invites community and collaboration (Aquarius) to replace individual prominence, the cult of personality and the excessive centralisation of power (Leo). It is a collective invitation to move from “I” to “we” — to build real, horizontal and conscious support networks, rather than depending on single authority figures and vertical systems of power. For those working on their own mental health, this cycle can favour the search for therapeutic community, support groups and genuine connection, as a complement to individual work.

The body of the Earth and the human body: new diseases, the same warning

The climate crisis has measurably altered the world map of infectious diseases. The accelerated global warming of recent years — 2024 was recognised as the hottest

year ever recorded — has been associated with the geographic expansion of vector-borne diseases. Oropouche fever, until recently confined to the Amazon rainforest, recorded almost 12,000 confirmed cases in Brazil in 2025, including in states geographically far from the Amazon. Chikungunya caused, in the same year, more than 445,000 suspected and confirmed cases worldwide. Diseases such as dengue, Zika and West Nile fever continue to spread into regions that had never before recorded them, as rising temperatures expand the habitats of the mosquitoes that transmit them.

At the same time, viruses such as H5N1 avian flu — already with confirmed cases at commercial farms in several countries — and mpox, whose spread is linked to deforestation, disorderly urbanisation and closer proximity between human and wild animal populations, remain under international surveillance.

Symbolically, Neptune — ruler of contagion, of invisible borders and of that which dissolves without being seen — is located precisely in Aries, a cardinal sign of beginnings and urgency, in conjunction with Saturn. This sky well describes what is observed on the ground: threats that dissolve and reassemble elsewhere (Neptune), yet demand an immediate structural response (Saturn in a cardinal sign). It is an invitation to look at the body of the Earth and the human body as a single system in imbalance — and to understand that collective physical symptoms are rarely disconnected from the emotional and spiritual symptoms that precede them. After all, it was the EARTH that made Man!

Tending the inner temple: the path of return

All these cycles — the triple conjunction of 2020, the distant echo of Pluto in Cancer, the Nodes that changed axis, Chiron wounded in Aries, Saturn and Neptune united in the sign of beginnings, and even the diseases emerging from a planet out of balance — point, ultimately, to the same invitation: to welcome what remains unintegrated. The inner child who learned to fall silent before authority, the fear that had no space to be named during the pandemic, the anger at decisions made without a voice, the grief for losses that collective urgency did not allow to be properly mourned.

In systemic language, what is not welcomed individually tends to repeat collectively — and what is not resolved collectively leaves marks on the generations that follow. The public figures mentioned here, each in their own way and under their own sky, had the courage to make visible what, for generations, had remained hidden behind an image of strength, success or duty. This gesture — from Raquel Tavares to Simone Biles, from Selena Gomez to Naomi Osaka — is also, in its own way, a small act of collective healing: each public testimony of vulnerability gives permission to thousands of anonymous people to recognise their own fragility without shame.

The work of tending the “inner temple” is not an escape from the world, but exactly the opposite path: it is recognising that lasting peace between nations begins with each person's capacity to make peace with their own wounds — especially those which, for the sake of survival, learned to disguise themselves as strength, control or war.

Final note

In this article I offer a symbolic reading, and I do not intend to replace medical, psychological or epidemiological advice, nor does it constitute a diagnosis or psychological assessment of the public figures mentioned — whose experiences I refer to here solely on the basis of statements and facts they themselves have made public. Astrology, as used here, is a tool of contextualisation and meaning — a map of time that helps us understand why certain collective wounds emerge at particular historical moments, and what paths of integration open up afterwards.

When we understand something, we accept it — but we do not give up; we seek to act, to change, to shift something that allows us to reclaim the true intention to UNITE!

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